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NEWS RELEASE

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**ROMAINE ANNOUNCES ACQUISITION OF
NORTH FORK PRESERVE**

Suffolk County Legislator Edward Romaine is pleased to announce the acquisition of the "North Fork Preserve" property in Riverhead.

"Last year I was happy to sponsor the necessary planning steps resolution to re-invigorate the appraisal process and acquisition negotiations for this significant tract of land, and I would be pleased to sponsor the acquisition resolution to finalize the purchase" said Legislator Romaine, adding "the conceptual plan proposed by the County's Parks Department will offer amenities that the county has never before had the ability to offer at one location."

The North Fork Preserve, a nearly 400-acre tract along Sound Avenue in Riverhead, was farmed for over 200 years, and has long been deemed a high priority for preservation by local environmental groups and government agencies. As a whole, it boasts one of the largest swamp forests on the North Fork. It is rich with wetlands, woodlands, and bird and animal habitat. It is a unique tract due to its biology and size, and is a frequent stop for migrating birds.

The 133.27-acre parcel on the northern side, North Fork Preserve Co., consists of rich panoply of swamp forest, woodlands, and wetlands and important drainage systems. It is believed to be the largest tract of woodlands and swamp forest now in existence on the North Fork. The southern half of the property, North Fork Preserve, Inc., has a Christmas tree farm and is in a NYS Agricultural District.

Development rights have previously been sold on the 34-acre parcel to the southeast (Town of Riverhead) as well as on the 50-acres on the southwest corner (County).

"The two previously preserved parcels on the eastern and western border of the North Fork Preserve parcel are commonly referred to as buffers for the Preserve, and I am currently working with the County's Parks Department to acquire the underlying fee to the 50-acre parcel on the western side. If acquired, the Parks Department envisions an equestrian center, which would certainly tie in to the future 300-acre county park nicely," added Romaine.